

REMARKS

A. Status of Claims

Claims 1 and 2 are pending in the application.

B. Summary Of Office Action

The Examiner has rejected claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 6,061,448 to Smith et al. ("Smith").

C. Response

1. Information Disclosure Statements

The Applicant requests the Examiner's consideration and return of the initialed Form PTO-1449 for the Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement mailed April 26, 2004, and requests the Examiner's consideration of the new Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement, transmitted herewith.

2. Claim Rejections

The Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejections and requests reconsideration of the claims in view of the following remarks. The reference cited by the Examiner does not disclose, teach or suggest all of the elements of claims 1 and 2.

At a minimum, Smith does not disclose step (a) of claim 1 and the corresponding element of system claim 2, namely, "facilitating automatic creation of a first electronic message directed to the plurality of recipients by a first user, wherein said first electronic message comprises a permission to access the service based on a public key of each recipient and is signed with a digital signature of the first user".

Smith discloses an approach to distributing information that involves sending an encrypted document to multiple recipients. Smith, col. 5, lines 46-53. This is different from the

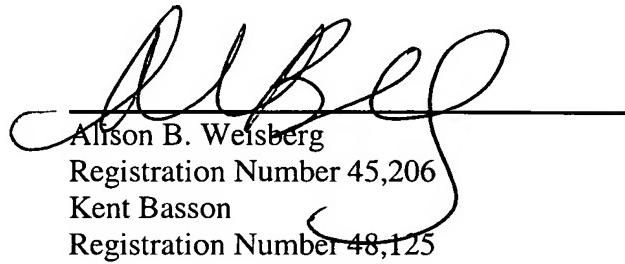
claimed invention in several important ways. Smith discloses sending a document itself rather than a reference to a document (i.e., permission to access a service, where the service may be a document). Thus, in the present invention, the recipient receives a link that allows the recipient to gain access to the desired service using his private key. The permission can be sent in clear text, instead of relying on encryption for security like the system disclosed in Smith. Further, the permission can be further delegated - creating a delegation chain in this manner provides an audit trail, thereby allowing a recipient of the permission chain to know the sequence of parties through which the permission has passed. This advantage cannot be realized by the system disclosed in Smith, where a user would have to decrypt the document and re-encrypt it in order to send it to a subsequent party.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that both pending claims are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the pending rejections and the timely allowance of the pending claims. If there are any fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at 215-963-5091 to discuss any matter concerning this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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